

News Release

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SBA & Mayor Peyton Visit Small Businesses that do Business with JaxPort

SBA District Director and Mayor Peyton visit with 5 small business owners

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – SBA District Director, Wilfredo J. Gonzalez and Jacksonville's Mayor John Peyton spent the day on Tuesday, September 30th visiting with and touring five small businesses in Jacksonville which carry contracts with the Jacksonville Port Authority. Paul Crawford, Deputy Director for the Jacksonville Economic Commission and Ricardo Morales, Jr., Chairman of the Board for JaxPort, also joined this small business tour. These visits allow Mayor Peyton the opportunity to learn in detail about small businesses in his jurisdiction as well as hear any concerns the small business owners may have that the City may address. The Five entrepreneurs visited were:

- Bandele Onasanya, President & CEO of Onas Corporation; a family-owned General Construction and Civil Engineering firm. Onas Corporation has current contracts with the City of Jacksonville as well as JaxPort's new terminal facility. Onas is also active with the Jacksonville Transportation Authority and JEA.
- Ann Freeman, Owner, River City Security Services, Inc- River City Security holds a large contract with JaxPort in providing security for several areas of the Port; including the cruise terminal and the main JaxPort offices. River City provides contracted professional security officers, armed and unarmed, for public and private entities.
- Arun Venkatesan, President of SGS Technologie, LLC. SGS Technologie is an IT consulting and software development firm employing well over 200 people and located in Jacksonville, Virginia, India, Singapore and the Netherlands. SGS has many clients; including JaxPort, where they have created and maintain Jaxportjobs.com with over 60,000 end users.
- Edward J. Eng, President, ENG Engineering, Inc; offering one stop engineering services including mechanical, plumbing, electrical, fire protection, surveillance, IT, infrared and forensic services. The business is located in the Baymeadows area, has received SBA-backed funding and is an active 8(a) firm in the SBA North Florida District's portfolio. Edward Eng described his scopes of work to Mayor Peyton including the contracts he has active with JaxPort.
- Cynthia Jones, Owner, Genesis Café and Catering on Old Kings Road South. The Mayor had a chance to talk to Ms. Jones and her involvement with the Jacksonville Small and Emerging Business Program. Also in attendance was Yetunde Oyewole with JaxPort, Ivy Johnson with the City of Jacksonville's Equal Business Opportunity Office, Carlton Robinson, President of the First Coast African American Chamber, and Pat Blanchard of the Jacksonville Women's

Business Center; all of who have been great resources for Ms. Jones as a small business owner in the restaurant industry.

“Tuesday’s tour was the 7th small business tour the SBA has taken with Mayor Peyton. We have visited Hispanic-owned, Women-owned, Veteran-Owned, Asian American-owned and African American-owned small businesses. We have also taken a day to highlight the ethnic Chambers of Commerce in Jacksonville creating a Memorandum of Agreement with all of the Chambers to work together to assist in growing our small business community,” says Wilfredo J. Gonzalez of the SBA. The SBA and the City of Jacksonville plan to continue the tours of small businesses around Jacksonville to highlight small business successes in the area and to provide an opportunity for open communication between the city’s leader and small business owners.

For more information on SBA’s programs and Services in North Florida, please visit www.sba.gov/fl/north

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